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HOMEMAKERS' CHAT

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U. S. DEPARTMENT  
OF AGRICULTURE  
OFFICE OF INFORMATION

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SUBJECT: "It'll Have To Be Altered" ... Information from clothing specialists  
of the U. S. Department of Agriculture

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Picture yourself in this scene.

You're in a department store. Or maybe it's your favorite dress shop. You've found the much-needed dress you've been looking for. The one that's on your "must" list. The color's just what you had in mind. The style is practical. The dress is well-made. In fact...it's exactly what you want. You try it on. Then as you stand before the mirror...you and the clerk say - as in a chorus - "It'll have to be altered."

Well...here's a bit of advice from clothing specialists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

If the garment requires complicated changes...don't buy it. Clothing is too scarce - this season - to warrant gambling on a misfit that may go unworn. So buy a dress with an appraising eye on alterations.

Some ready-made dresses are difficult to alter. If you can't find a dress that fits throughout...find one that fits the upper part of the body. It's usually much easier to alter the skirt.

And here are some other pointers you'll want to keep in mind.

When you try on the ready-made dress in the store...examine the seams. Look at the hems and waistline too. See if there's enough cloth to allow for the changes you'll need to make. Remember that if seams are let out in some materials...the previous stitching line will show through. That's particularly true of jersey. Skimpy shoulder seams soon tear out. You can't enlarge a narrow

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sleeve cap or back unless the dress has unusually wide seams. If it's a wash dress...you need to keep shrinkage in mind.

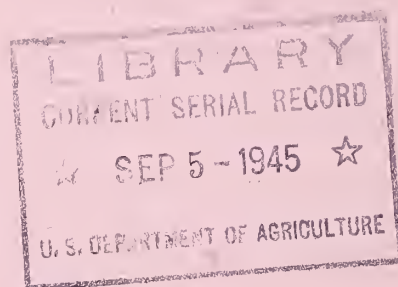
It's possible - of course - to do a good job of simple alterations on a ready-made dress. And in just a moment...I'll tell you about a bulletin that will help you when making alterations.

Many ready-made dresses need to have the belt shortened and the hem adjusted. If you need to shorten the belt...the clothing specialists advise marking the correct length. Then remove the extra length from the buckle end.

As to the hem - the specialists say make sure the waistline and hip line are properly fitted before you try to mark the length. Then have someone measure the desired distance from the floor with a yardstick or skirt marker. Maybe you can get this done at the store. When you're having the hem adjusted...it's a good idea to wear the shoes you'll wear with the dress. Otherwise the hem marked to go with low-heeled shoes will be too short when you put on higher heels.

Go about the alterations with caution. Don't rip any more seams than are necessary. Remove the machine stitching carefully to avoid pulling or tearing the cloth. Take care not to stretch the seams when you press the opened edges.

Now for the bulletin, I mentioned awhile ago. It's called "Fitting Dresses"...and you may get a copy free. Just send your name and address to the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D. C. Ask for the bulletin, "Fitting Dresses".



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